Statement of Substance of Interview

[0003]   Examiner Hall graciously talked with me—the undersigned representative for the Applicant—at the US Patent and Trademark Office on March 18, 2009. Applicant greatly appreciates the Examiner's willingness to talk. Such willingness is invaluable to both of us in our common goal of an expedited prosecution of this patent application.

[0004]   During the interview, I discussed how the claims differed from the cited references, namely Shimakawa, DeStefano and Logg. Without conceding the propriety of the rejections and in the interest of expediting prosecution, I also proposed several possible clarifying amendments.

[0005]   Examiner Hall and I had extensive discussion about function of the invention with respect to Fig. 4 and proposed claim amendments that highlight differences between the function and the references. I understood the Examiner to tentatively concur that the proposed amendments appeared to overcome the section 101 rejections. Examiner Hall also indicated that he would bear the arguments in mind when he reviews the formal response.

[0006]   Applicant herein amends the claims in the manner discussed during the interview. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the pending claims are allowable over the cited documents of record for at least the reasons discussed during the interview.

REMARKS

[0007] Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of all of the claims of the application. Claims 1-8, 10, 12, 13, 15-26, 28-35, 37, 39, 41, 44-47 are presently pending. Claims 1-7, 10, 12, 13, 15-21, 23, 24, 28-33, 35-37, 39, 41 and 44-47 are amended herein. Claims 9, 11, 14, 27 and 40 are cancelled herein without prejudice or disclaimer.

Formal Request for an Interview

[0008] If the Examiner's reply to this communication is anything other than allowance of all pending claims and the only issues that remain are minor or formal matters, then I formally request an interview with the Examiner. I encourage the Examiner to call me—the undersigned representative for the Applicant—so that we can talk about this matter so as to resolve any outstanding issues quickly and efficiently over the phone.

[0009] Please contact me to schedule a date and time for a telephone interview that is most convenient for both of us. While email works great for me, I welcome your call as well. My contact information may be found on the last page of this response.

Claim Amendments

[0010] Without conceding the propriety of the rejections herein and in the interest of expediting prosecution, Applicant amends claims 1-7, 10, 12, 13, 15-21, 23, 24, 28-33, 35-37, 39, 41 and 44-47 herein. Claims 9, 11, 14, 27 and 40 are cancelled herein without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicant amends claims to clarify claimed features. These amendments are fully supported by the Application and are made to expedite prosecution

and more quickly identify allowable subject matter. Such amendments are merely intended to clarify the claimed features, and should not be construed as further limiting the claimed invention in response to the cited references.

Substantive Matters

Claim Rejections under § 101

[0011]   Claims 1-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Furthermore, in light of the amendments presented herein and the decisions/agreements reached during the above-discussed Examiner interview, Applicant submits that these rejections are moot. Accordingly, Applicant asks the Examiner to withdraw these rejections.

[0012]   If the Examiner maintains the rejection of these claims, then Applicant requests additional guidance as to what is necessary to overcome the rejection.

Claim Rejections under § 103 in view of Shimakawa, DeStefano and Logg

[0013]   Claims 1-35, 37, 39-41 and 44-47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) for allegedly being unpatentable over US Patent No. 7,275,987 to Shimakawa et al. ("Shimakawa") in view of US Patent No. 6,304,259 to DeStefano ("DeStefano") and further in view of US Patent No. 4,738,451 to Logg ("Logg"). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections. Furthermore, in light of the amendments presented herein, Applicant submits that these rejections are moot. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully asks the Examiner to withdraw these rejections.

Independent claim 1

[0014]   Independent claim 1, as amended, recites (in part):

filtering, in the computer game, *the collected plurality of virtual objects based on their respective attributes that are assigned during the computer game play*, the filtering comprising filtering the collected plurality of virtual objects based on one or more filters ;

displaying, on the game display, an inventory management describer in addition to the graphical scene describer of the game display, the inventory management describer comprising:

one or more filter icons representing the one or more filters; and

an inventory display for displaying the plurality of virtual objects;

receiving, in the computer game play, an input via an input device from the game player for activating a filter of the one or more filters, the *activating comprising selecting, in the inventory management describer, a filter icon representing the filter*; and

displaying, upon the activating of the filter, *a portion of the plurality of virtual objects in the inventory display, each of the plurality of virtual objects in the inventory display including at least an attribute that matches the filter*, wherein the displaying the portion of the plurality of virtual objects based on the filter activated by the game player facilitates the game player determining which of the plurality of virtual objects to be disposed or used in the computer game play as the computer generated representation of the game player interacts with the one or more characters in the virtual world in the graphical scene describer of the game display

[0015]   Applicant respectfully submits that none of the cited references Shimakawa, DeStefano, and Logg, whether taken alone or in combination, discloses, teaches or suggests the above emphasized features.

[0016]   Shimakawa discloses that objects created in conformity with the data format of objects to be handled in a virtual world are offered to users on the terminal computers of the users independently of the virtual world. According to Shimakawa, "each character in the virtual world is capable of using items, such as a car and a telephone, in the virtual world…Also, the state of use of the item is displayed on the terminal computer of the user pertinent to the character using the item, and the situation of the use is also displayed on the terminal computers of the users pertinent to the other characters." (Shimakawa at col.3, lines 55-61). Shimakawa further discloses that "the object data format has items and values corresponding to the items, and it includes an object ID, an appellation, an attribute, a possessor, a size, a current position and a displaying image as the items." (Shimakawa at col.4, lines 41-45).

[0017]   However, Shimakawa is completely silent with respect to the emphasized features, e.g., "filtering the collected plurality of virtual objects," "displaying an inventory management describer in addition to the graphical scene describer," "receiving an input for activating a filter," and "displaying, upon the activating of the filter, a portion of the plurality of virtual objects in the inventory display, each of the plurality of virtual objects in the inventory display including at least an attribute that matches the filter, wherein the displaying the portion of the plurality of virtual objects…facilitates the game player determining which of the plurality of virtual objects to be disposed or used in the computer game play as the computer generated representation of the game player interacts with the one or more characters in the virtual world…"

[0018]   DeStefano does not remedy the deficiency of Shimakawa. Destefano discloses a number of unique user interface mechanisms to visually link information presented to a user and thereby facilitate user comprehension of the contextual

relationship of such information. DeStefano in Fig. 3 discloses a level identifier, which "can have a number of possible values, including a null value, a single level value, a list of level values, a range of level values, a list of ranges of level values, an upper level boundary, a lower level boundary, or any combination thereof..." (DeStefano at col.9, lines 12-23). DeStefano in Fig. 11 further discloses a suitable dialog box for configuration of a lens filter. However, DeStefano is completely silent with respect to the above emphasized features.

[0019]   Logg does not remedy the deficiency either. Logg discloses a multi-player, multi-character video game where the game rules force the players to cooperate in negotiating the maze at least until the characters reach a portion of the maze where a specific objective is located. Logg, however, does not teach the emphasized features recited in claim 1.

[0020]   Accordingly, independent claim 1, as amended, is respectfully asserted patentable over Shimakawa, DeStefano and Logg.

Independent claims 23 and 31

[0021]   Independent claims 23 and 31 are amended to include features similar to those in the amended claim 1. For example, claims 23 and 31 both are amended to recite the features "graphical scene describer" and "inventory management describer" on a game display, activating a filter by "selecting an inventory filter icon," and "displaying one or more filtered virtual item icons, each displayed virtual filtered item icon representing at least one of the plurality of collected and hidden virtual objects that includes the attributes assigned during play of the computer game and filtered based on the filter associated with the inventory filter icon." Thus, independent claims 23 and 31

are respectfully asserted patentable over Shimakawa, DeStefano and Logg for at least the reasons provided above with reference to claim 1.

Dependent Claims 2-8, 10, 12, 13, 15-22, 24-26, 28-30, 32-35, 37, 39, 41 and 44-47

[0022]   These claims ultimately depend upon one of independent claims 1, 23 and 31. As discussed above, each of the independent claims 1, 23 and 31 is patentable over the cited references. It is axiomatic that any dependent claim which depends from a base claim that is patentable over cited references is also patentable over the cited references. Additionally, some or all of these claims may also be allowable for additional independent reasons.

[0023]   For example, in addition to the reasons provided above, dependent claim 24 is respectfully asserted patentable over the cited references for the following additional reasons.

[0024]   Dependent claim 24, as amended, recites:

> The electronic device of claim 23, wherein ***dragging***, with an input device, ***one of the virtual item icons associated with one of the virtual objects to a different inventory filter icon in the inventory management describer alters the attributes of the one of the virtual objects such that the altered attributes of the one of the virtual objects match a different filter associated with the different inventory filter icon***.

[0025]   In rejecting the above emphasized feature, the Office Action cited DeStefano at col. 35, lines 4-15, which merely discloses dragging a compass to change views, e.g., to expand a minimized stack into a collapsed stack representation, of abstraction stacks. In fact, the "compass" in DeStefano merely serves as an indicator, not a "virtual item icon" as recited in claim 23. Applicant respectfully submits that the "dragging the compass" to

change viewpoint of stack representation, as disclosed in DeStefano, is not "dragging one of the virtual item icons associated with one of the virtual objects to a different inventory filter icon in the inventory management describer" that, as recited in claim 24, "alters the attributes of the one of the virtual objects such that the altered attributes of the one of the virtual objects match a different filter associated with the different inventory filter icon."

Conclusion

[0026] All pending claims are in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and prompt issuance of the application. If any issues remain that prevent issuance of this application, the **Examiner is urged to contact me before issuing a subsequent Action**. Please call or email me at your convenience.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lee & Hayes, PLLC
Representatives for Applicant

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